

At-A-Glance

The Hearing Loss Prevention Program provides leadership to reduce the prevalence of occupational hearing loss. This snapshot shows recent accomplishments and upcoming work.

What are our priorities?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Hearing Loss Prevention Program focuses on reducing occupational hearing loss through research on controlling hazardous noise, developing engineering noise controls, ensuring hearing protectors are used effectively, performing occupational hearing loss surveillance, and investigating damage risk criteria for impulse noise. The Program works with partners in industry, labor, trade associations, professional organizations, and academia.

What do we do?

- Develop and evaluate engineering and administrative controls to reduce worker exposure to hazardous noise levels.
- Conduct surveillance of occupational hearing loss to identify workers at increased risk and monitor progress in prevention.
- Promote evidence-based best practices for work-related hearing loss prevention by developing NIOSH communication products, including guidelines and criteria documents.
- Advance hearing protector and fit-testing technology to ensure workers are protected when engineering or administrative controls have not yet been implemented or do not reduce noise to safe levels.
- Identify, characterize, and reduce risk factors associated with occupational hearing loss, especially intermittent and impulsive noise exposures that present greater risk.

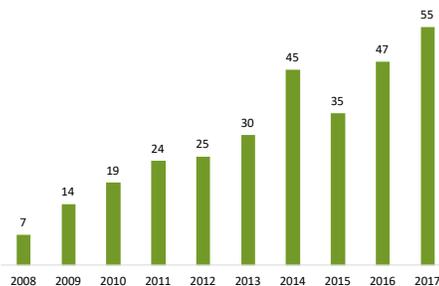
What have we accomplished?

- Published papers on [the prevalence of hearing loss among noise-exposed workers within the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting Sector](#) and within the [Healthcare and Social Assistance Sector](#) for the period 2003-2012.
- Contributed to a consensus standard to validate the performance of hearing protector fit-test systems – [ANSI/ASA S12.71](#).
- Updated the [Occupational Hearing Loss \(OHL\) Surveillance topic page](#) on the NIOSH website to include nine new pages with sector-specific statistics and charts.
- Released the [NIOSH Sound Level Meter App for iOS 11](#) and launched a [dedicated web page](#). The suitability of using a [smartphone for noise surveys](#) has been evaluated.
- Conducted audiometric screening and trained more than 180 persons in hearing protector fitting at the 2017 ConExpo-Con/Agg convention, an international construction trade show conference.
- Published the [Health Hazard Evaluation Noise Exposures for surgical staff during total knee replacement surgeries](#). Surgical staff are exposed to hazardous noise levels during certain types of surgical procedures.
- Coordinated the [CDC Public Health Grand Rounds on Hearing Health Across a Lifespan](#). More than 1,100 persons viewed the live-streamed event and more than 165,000 persons visited the Grand Rounds web pages
- In partnership with the National Hearing Conservation Association, celebrated the 10th anniversary of the [Safe-in-Sound Award for Excellence in Hearing Loss Prevention and Innovation](#). Fourteen hearing loss prevention programs and eight innovators have been recognized.

What's next?

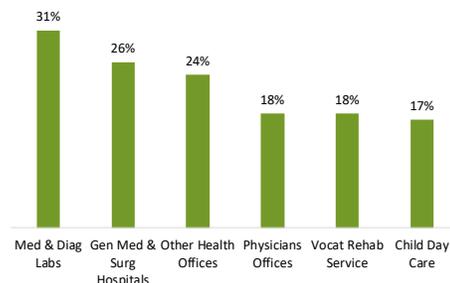
- Provide best practice recommendations for integrating fit testing into hearing loss prevention programs on a new NIOSH topic web page for Hearing Protector Fit Testing.
- Conduct a workshop on hearing protector fit-testing technologies at the 2018 National Hearing Conservation Association meeting.
- Contribute to the American Industrial Hygiene Association Noise Manual 6th Edition by writing key chapters on noise measurement, ototoxic chemicals and impulse noise exposure.
- Publish noise controls and noise control strategies for load-haul-dump, jumbo drills, and haul trucks used in underground metal mining.
- Conduct audiometric screening and fit testing at the 2018 Elko Mining Expo.

Visits to the Safe-in-Sound Website (in thousands)



Source: Bluehost WebAnalytics

Prevalence of hearing loss for noise-exposed workers within the Healthcare and Social Assistance Sector



Source: Adapted from Masterson et al. "Prevalence of Hearing Loss among Noise-Exposed Workers within the Healthcare and Social Assistance Sector"

Spotlight:
CDC Grand Rounds Presentation:
[It's Loud Out There - Hearing Health across the Lifespan](#)



To learn more, visit
<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise/default.html>

<https://doi.org/10.26616/NIOSH/PUB2018144>
 DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2018-144